

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of all pending claims (including withdrawn claims) will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~striketrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

1. (currently amended) A method of encouraging a customer to visit a hair salon, said method comprising:

deriving an expected date of visit of the customer; and

producing direct mail containing suggestions of hairstyles that can be applied to the customer when said expected date of visit of the customer is a predetermined period ahead.

2. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein in said deriving, an expected next date of visit of the customer is derived based on previous date and time of visit information and average visit interval information of the customer.

3. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising: retrieving hairstyles that match with preferences of the customer from a hairstyle information database in which hairstyle information is stored; and extracting customer information from a customer management information database, the customer information stored in the customer management information database by a customer information registering means and a customer number register issuing means.

4. (currently amended) A computer readable medium storing program code for causing a computer to encourage a customer to visit a hair salon, comprising:

deriving an expected date of visit of the customer; and

producing direct mail containing suggestions of hairstyles that can be applied to the customer when said expected date of visit of the customer is a predetermined period ahead.

5. (currently amended) An apparatus for encouraging a customer to visit a hair

salon, said apparatus comprising:

input means via which information related to the customer is input into said apparatus;
a first database in which information related to the customer is stored;
a second database in which information related to latest hairstyles is stored; and
a processing part including a registration program for registering information into said first and second databases and direct mail sending program that derives an expected date of visit of the customer using data obtained from said first database based on previous date and time of visit information and average visit interval information of the customer and, when said expected date of visit of the customer is a predetermined period ahead, produces direct mail containing suggestions of hairstyles that can be applied to the customer using data obtained from said first and second databases.

6. (original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein said first database includes fields related to data such as customer number, management number, name, sex, postal address, E-mail address, telephone number, mobile telephone number, birthday, age, occupation, direct mail sending interval, direct mail producing interval, normal visit interval, previous date of visit, previous length of hair (front, back, outer and inner), growth rate, type, diameter, number of visits, shortest visit interval, average visit interval, longest visit interval, an image of the face and an image of the total body.

7. (original) The apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein said second database includes fields related to data such as style code, required length (front, back, outer and inner), image file name of the face, image file name of the total body, type of hair, diameter of hair, and whether it is a trend or not.

8. (new) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the customer is an individual customer and the suggestions of hairstyle are made with reference to the individual customer's present hair condition.